

Hello once again,

The list grew significantly after the last e-mail, which makes me very happy. I really enjoyed getting the replies and being able to interact with the familiar people of Dubuque. I'm going to preface this letter by saying that it is longer than the last one, and that because of the diverse nature of the mailing list, there will undoubtedly be parts that don't interest everyone.

September was a very busy month for me, and for everyone at ND. As our classes started to get into the swing of things and we started to get a feel for campus life, we also had the opportunity to get involved with any number of the hundreds of clubs and activities on campus. As I said in my last letter, I made the University Chorale, an approximately 60 voice choir, run by the department of music. We have two trips planned for this year, the first of which is in the winter to the southern east coast, including the DC area. Our other trip will be in late May to early June and will take us to New Zealand and Hawaii. While I'm on the topic of music, I will also mention that I started taking private voice lessons at the beginning of the month, and, as a non-music major, I have the opportunity to perform a much broader repertoire than the standard Italian classics.

A major high point came early in the month, when I got to go to an Ok Go concert Friday night, Sept. 7th. It was a great concert and a great way to hang out with and get to know better the new friends I have been making. It was also great live music in a fairly intimate setting.

Despite our losing record in football games, home football weekends continue to be a high point of any week. At our most recent pep rally, Regis Philbin was the guest of honor, and while his rousing speech didn't produce the desired effect on the field, I think it has led to a renewed spirit here on campus. Women's sports have actually turned out to be much more exciting and successful since I've been here. My residence hall, O'Neill Hall, is actually the official sponsor of women's soccer, volleyball, and tennis here on campus, which means that we go to as many of those games as we can. Mostly we go to the women's soccer games which are fun because the team is very good and the stadium is much smaller and we can get right next to the field.

I also tried my hand at a number of other clubs, including Mock Trial, Freshman Class Council, a university radio station, a student run musical troupe, and the High School Ambassadors just to name a few. I'm only actually participating in High School Ambassadors and chorale at this point. I'm also active in hall government for my residence hall, which allows me to be part of the group that plans the daily goings on of our hall and our few campus-wide events throughout the year.

Of particular interest to some people may be the High School Ambassadors, which allow me to come back to senior as a branch of the office of admissions and present to students much like an admissions counselor would. A letter should be coming to school from the admissions office soon, if it hasn't already, detailing everything, and I look forward to setting up how this might work.

I am also looking into studying abroad, or "abroad" as I should say, my junior year. I say "abroad" because the program I am most interested in is the Washington D.C. program. The program would afford me the opportunity to live, study, and work in our nation's thriving capital. I would be able to apply for any number of internships in high-powered, recognizable places, ranging from "Meet the Press" to the White House. I would also take classes that take place in the "real world" with the option of a journalism class that meets in the Washington Press editors room or an art history class that takes place entirely in the Smithsonian Institute art galleries.

On October 8th I will be hosting a prospective student for the day here on campus. I get to take them around to all of my classes, show them around campus, and let them get the general feel for the Notre Dame experience. I guess someone decided that I was a good example of the ideal Notre Dame experience though I don't know where they might have gotten that idea from.

Classes have continued to go well. My hardest class is probably my advanced Spanish class, but that's ok because I was excellently prepared by the world languages staff at Senior. I don't know if I mentioned in my last letter, but I am taking five courses this semester. They are: Textual Analysis (Spanish), Foundations of Theology, Comparative Politics, Finite Mathematics, and Introduction to Astronomy. Along with those classes I have Chorale for one credit, and P.E. which is not for credit but is required to graduate.

For those of you who may be thinking that I have not been keeping myself busy enough, I have also been working a few hours a week at a cafe on campus. Mostly I make smoothies and ice cream treats. I am also able to operate the cash register and hot foods, but I prefer the cold stuff.

This Friday through Saturday, the 28-29, I went on my first retreat as a Notre Dame student. It was a great experience that allowed me to meet a lot of new people as we explored our faith and our place in the University. Through a combination of small group discussions and large group activities, we learned what it means to live our faith, regardless of what our faith may be. We spent a lot of time in our small groups, and I hope that I will have the opportunity to spend even more time with these new friends in the future.

In Notre Dame

Jesse